THE SOCIAL PLANNING and RESEARCH COUNCIL of Hamilton and District

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# COMMUNITY TRENDS IN

# HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS


Page

Introduction . . . . . 1

I. Community Trends

1. Population Trends. . . . . 2

2. Employment Trends. . . . . 3

3. The Family . . . . . 4

II. Service Trends

1. Income, Housing and Food Services . . . . . 6

2. Family and Children's Services. . . . . 6

3. Employment Services . . . . . 7

4. Police Services . . . . . 9

5. Services for the Disabled . . . . . 9

6. Health Services . . . . . 10

7. Services for Seniors. . . . . 12

8. Other Service Trends. . . . . 12

9. Systems and Organizational Trends . . . . . 13

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the results of a Community Trends Workshop which was organized and hosted by the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District (S.P.R.C.) on June 22, 1988. The purpose of this workshop was to involve representatives from a number of key community sectors in the identification of important community trends in Hamilton-Wentworth.

This workshop was initiated by the S.P.R.C. and the Strategic Planning Committee of the United Way of Burlington and Hamilton-Wentworth for the purpose of providing social service organizations and their funders with key trends information which could be utilized in the formation of program plans.

The key community informants who were involved in this workshop are listed below.

Barb Hawrylow, Office Manager, Economic Development Department,
Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth

Jim Thoms, Commissioner of Planning and Development,
Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth

Mike Schuster, Commissioner of Social Services,
Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth

Dr. Robert Kirby, Executive Director,
Hamilton-Wentworth District Health Council

Donna Slater, Social Development Officer,
Department of the Secretary of State

Andy Korosi, Labour Market Analyst,
Canada Employment and Immigration Commission

Inspector Terry Sullivan, Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police

Terry McCarthy, Program Supervisor
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

This report presents a summary of the more important trends which were identified and discussed during the course of the workshop. In some cases this information has been augmented by the results of discussions which have occurred between S.P.R.C. staff and other service providers within the community.

## I. Community Trends

### 1. Population Trends

1. **Population growth has rebounded.**

The population of Hamilton-Wentworth increased by approximately 2.2% between 1985 and 1987, a dramatic rebound from the low levels of growth experienced in the late 1970's and 1980's.

2. **Fastest growth rates in suburbs.**

All of the local municipalities experienced population growth between 1985 and 1987.

| Municipality | % Population Increase | # of New Residents |
|---|---|---|
| Ancaster | 15.4 | 2,600 |
| Dundas | 2.0 | 400 |
| Flamborough | 5.4 | 1,400 |
| Glanbrook | 2.1 | 200 |
| Hamilton | 0.6 | 1,900 |
| Stoney Creek | 6.4 | 2,700 |
| Region | 2.2 | 9,200 |

3. **Migration losses have reversed.**

During the early 1980's, more people left the Region than moved in. In 1983 and 1984, for example, the Region experienced a net loss of 1,001 persons through migration. In more recent years, this trend has reversed. In 1985 and 1986, the Region experienced a net gain of 755 persons through migration.

It appears that the Region has been successful in attracting people from Alberta, but less successful in attracting migration from the Toronto area.

4. **Still losing the 25 - 44 age group.**

The migration-induced population loss of the early 1980's was particularly concentrated within the 25 - 44 age group. In 1984, for example, the Region lost 454 persons within this age group. The magnitude of this loss now appears to be decreasing - in 1986 we only experienced a net loss of 35 persons within this age group.

## 2. Employment Trends

1. **Labour force growth has been strong.**

   Since 1985, employment growth has been strong. In the Hamilton-Wentworth area, the employed labour force increased by 12.5% - twice as fast as the province as a whole.

2. **Unemployment has fallen.**

   The unemployment rate has decreased steadily since peaking in 1983. In 1987, the annual average rate of 6.3% was considerably lower than the 1985 rate of 8.8%.

3. **Labour force participation has increased.**

   This decrease in unemployment has occurred despite the fact that there has been an increase in the proportion of adults who are seeking work. The labour force participation rate increased from 65 percent in 1985 to 70 percent in 1987.

4. **Most employment growth is in the service sector.**

   The largest component of the employment increase has occurred within the service sector. Employment within this sector grew from 76,600 in 1985 to 97,200 in 1987 (a growth rate of 27%).

5. **Slower increase in manufacturing.**

   Employment in manufacturing has only increased moderately since 1985, following dramatic decrease in 1982 and 1983. Employment within this sector has grown from 77,800 in 1985 to 79,500 in 1987, an increase of 2.2%. As a result of the structural changes that have occurred within the Regional economy during the past two years, the manufacturing sector now employs 18,000 fewer people than the service sector. As recently as 1985, these roles were reversed.

6. **More jobs for women and youth.**

   The service sector is a traditionally strong employer of females and younger workers. As a result of the dramatic growth within this sector, unemployment among these two groups has dropped dramatically. At the same time, however, job losses in manufacturing have increased the unemployment rate among older workers.

7. **Female labour force has increased dramatically.**

The female labour force participation rate has increased dramatically, as the service sector has expanded. It rose from 55.8 percent in 1986 to 60.4 percent in 1987. For the first time, the local rate surpassed that of the provincial average.

8. **Labour shortages becoming evident.**

Labour shortages are becoming increasingly evident in many skilled occupations. While these skilled shortages are evident in all industrial sectors, skilled occupations within the manufacturing and construction sectors are particularly pronounced. Examples of these occupations in demand include many categories of technicians, technologists and tradespersons.

## 3. The Family

1. **Divorce rate is levelling off.**

In the early 1980's, the Canadian divorce rate peaked and levelled out for the first time since it began to climb in the late 1960's. The rate is expected to remain level or decrease somewhat, during the next few years. Given the relatively large proportion of divorced persons who re-marry, the incidence of single-parent families in the population could begin to decrease in the latter part of the 1980's.

2. **Growth in two-income families.**

The incidence of two-income families will continue to rise, particularly among young families, due to

a) the increased opportunity for female labour force participation due to the creation of jobs within the service sector;

b) the high cost of housing.

3. **More kids on the street.**

There has been an apparent increase in the number of "street kids" in Hamilton, including teenage prostitutes and drug hustlers. This development was predicted as a delayed consequence of the severe recession of 1982.

4. **Effects of economic recovery on family incomes have been mixed.**
   The structural changes that are occurring within our economy are replacing well-paid manufacturing jobs with lower paying service sector employment. As a result, average employment income in the Region may be increasing quite slowly although up-to-date statistics are not available. At the same time, however, the rapid increase in employment opportunities for women has increased the number of two income families in the Region.

5. **Fewer young families.**
   Continuing demographic changes continue to result in a decreased number of "young families" in the Region and an increased number of family heads aged 35 to 50 and 65 plus.

## II. Service Trends

### 1. Income, Housing and Food Services

1. **There is a continuing shortage of affordable housing.**
   The housing affordability crisis in Hamilton-Wentworth has worsened in recent months. The size of waiting lists for non-profit units has increased dramatically. Average housing prices are "beyond the means" of many residents.

2. **The use of food banks is increasing.**
   As a greater proportion of disposable income is devoted to housing costs, a larger number of working poor and social assistance recipients are utilizing food banks.

3. **The need for shelter services for the victims of family violence remains high.**
   Increased reporting of family violence has increased the demand for shelter at a rate which exceeds the growth in supply.

4. **Income supplementation for the working poor is increasing.**
   Changes in the administration of G.W.A. funds have increased the opportunity to supplement the incomes of some working poor.

### 2. Family and Children's Services

1. **There has been a dramatic increase in the demand for child care services.**
   The increase in female labour force activity has resulted in a dramatic increase in demand for child care services.

2. **There is a growing shortage of foster care opportunities.**
   The increased female labour force activity, coupled with a growth in the number of reported child welfare cases has resulted in an under-supply of foster homes.

3. **There is an ongoing need for expanded crisis services for children.**
   The growth in the capacity of this sector has not kept pace with increases in demand.

4. **There is an increased need for specialized services for "street kids".**
   The perceived increase in the number of homeless adolescents has not been matched by an increase in services to this group. Many of the services which were available in the 1960's and early 1970's are no longer operating because of the decrease in demand which occurred in the late seventies.

5. **There is an ongoing need for more shelter and support services to the victims of family violence.**
   The supply of services within this sector have not kept pace with increases in demand.

6. **There is an increased demand for family and children's services in rural and suburban areas.**
   Population increases outside of the City of Hamilton have increased the demand for services in surrounding areas.

7. **Recent increases in the reporting of child abuse and neglect will continue.**
   The mandatory reporting of child abuse and the increasing degree of public awareness about the problem will continue to increase the number of reported cases.

## 3. Employment Services

1. **There is a continued need for services to unemployed older workers.**
   Recent developments in the Regional economy have decreased unemployment among the young and increased unemployment among older, displaced workers. Retraining is a primary need among older workers.

2. **Forecasts of labour shortages are resulting in increased efforts to increase the employability of under-employed groups.**
   Demographic changes have resulted in a decreased number of young persons entering the labour force. Future labour force needs will therefore be met by increasing the labour participation rates of groups who have been,

traditionally, underemployed - women, visible minorities, natives and the disabled. Employment programs will increasingly focus upon these target groups as well as other groups facing difficulty in adapting to a changing labour market such as older workers (i.e., victims of plant closures/plant down sizing) and social assistance recipients.

3. **Given the rapidly changing labour force needs, based upon rapid technological change, training programs will be required to support workers during all stages of their careers.**
   As such, the notion of education as a one-time activity is out-dated and the formal education system as well as employer and government training programs must coalesce into a "training continuum".

4. **Federal employment services are increasingly emphasizing "partnerships" with the community.**
   That is, it is recognized that in order to meet the needs of the local labour market, feedback from the key players in labour market adjustment is required to ensure that the needs are correctly identified and priorized and then to determine if programs implemented are successful in meeting those needs. As such, an increasingly co-ordinated approach between the various organizations including the Canada Employment Centre, Ministry of Skills Development, Hamilton-Wentworth Skills Advisory Committee, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Mohawk College and other organizations are seen as key ingredients for future successful labour market interventions.

5. **Employers are increasingly looking for "generalists" who can be trained within the company.**
   Rapidly changing labour force needs have required that employers become more involved in training employees for the "unique" requirements of their particular company. This has resulted in a greater priority being attached to custom-designed, on-the-job training programs. There has been a corresponding decrease in demand for general, institutional-based programs for the development of individual skills.

## 4. Police Services

1. Crime rates are increasing faster than the rate of population growth.

   Crime rates dropped during the 1982 recession but have begun to increase as the economic recovery grows in magnitude.

2. There will be a continued increase in emphasis upon community-based policing and prevention programs.

   Programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, Block Parents and foot patrols will increase in importance. The success of preventative programs is sometimes hampered because it is difficult to develop these kinds of programs in neighbourhoods which need them the most - high crime areas.

3. Adolescent prostitution has increased.

   An increase in homeless youths and adolescent prostitutes has been observed during the past year. Crimes involving young persons and charges for adolescent prostitution have also increased.

4. Legislative changes have increased the independence of adolescents.

   The Young Offenders Act and other family reform legislation have increased the legal independence of adolescents and decreased family controls. Social responses to this change have been limited by the fact that there has not been a corresponding increase in services for adolescents.

5. There is a need to better organize service responses to the victims of crime.

   Increased priority is being attached to the need for support services to the victims of crime. The main challenge in meeting these needs relates to the problem of developing a response model which best utilizes existing services in the community.

## 5. Services for the Disabled

1. The proportion of disabled persons in the general population will increase.

   Medical advances are increasing the life expectancy of persons born with physical and mental disabilities. An increasing number of handicapped

newborns will survive to adulthood and this will increase the proportion of the population which will require both physical and social supports throughout their life cycle.

2. Service costs to the disabled will increase at a much faster rate than in the past.

   The increased survival rate of disabled newborns and the development of new and costly technological aids will increase the costs of support to disabled persons.

3. The need for support services to developmentally handicapped adults will increase.

   The increased identification of developmentally handicapped children and adolescents which has occurred during the past decade will begin to impact on adult services as these individuals reach the age of eighteen. This increase in the need for support services is augmented by the ongoing policy of de-institutionalization of handicapped clients.

4. There is an ongoing need for improved transportation services for the disabled.

   Traditional gaps between the supply and demand for transportation services have not been alleviated. These gaps will intensify as the size of the adolescent and adult disabled population increases.

5. Access issues for the disabled continue to be a priority.

   The access of disabled persons to housing and employment continue to be a major concern within this service sector.

## 6. Health Services

1. Increasing health care costs have become a major source of concern.

   Among industrialized countries, per capita health costs are relatively high in Ontario, despite the fact that our concentration of seniors is still relatively low. Consequently, there is a major concern about future costs as the concentration of seniors increases dramatically during the next three to four decades.

2. **There is an increased interest in re-structuring our current system of health services.**

   It is increasingly recognized that traditional cost controls will be ineffective in resolving cost-problems, given the dimensions of the problem. The solution may, therefore, lie in a re-structuring of the current system. The recently announced "Innovations in Health Care" Program will allocate $67.5 million over the next four years to fund innovative approaches to delivering health care.

3. **Alternatives need to be found for institutionalization of the aged.**

   Increased priority is being attached to "Hospital in the Home" programs, one-stop access for the elderly and incentives for "house calls" by physicians.

4. **There is an increased interest in developing new models for the delivery of physician services.**

   Increased priority is being attached to the enhancement of Community Health Centres and Human Service Organizations. More emphasis is being placed on medical manpower planning.

5. **Current priorities for service expansion include:**
   - out-patient services for alcoholics and drug users;
   - mental health crisis intervention services;
   - integrated homemakers' programs;
   - chronic and extended care beds.

6. **There is an ongoing need for improved support services to ex-psychiatric people in the community.**

   This long standing problem continues to be a major source of concern within the mental health and community service sectors.

## 7. Services for Seniors

1. There is a continuing need to create alternatives to institutionalization for seniors.

   A variety of programs need to be implemented which are designed to keep seniors out of institutions - home support, hospital-in-the-home, respite care and more house-calls by physicians (see section on health services).

2. One-stop-access programs will become standard models for the delivery of community services to seniors.

   One-stop-access pilot projects are being evaluated by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health is showing increased interest in this mode of service delivery. It is anticipated that this model will be developed in most communities during the coming years.

3. There is an ongoing need for improved public transportation services for the aged.

   As the number of aged persons in Hamilton-Wentworth increases, current supply-demand gaps in public transportation for the aged will increase. This problem will worsen as a smaller proportion of seniors are institutionalized because of growth in community support programs.

## 8. Other Service Trends

1. There will be a continued increase in the size of the visible minorities population in Hamilton-Wentworth.

   Ongoing changes in the sources of immigration to the local area will provide significant language and cultural challenges to the community services system. The need for language and "behavioural" interpreters will increase.

2. There is an increased demand for specialized services to native persons.

   There is an increased recognition that native persons have not been well-served by traditional community services. Increased priority will therefore be attached to the development of native-sponsored services.

## 9. Systems and Organizational Trends

1. **There has been an increased emphasis upon joint ventures and partnerships among Ministries and service providers.**

   Based upon a recognition that most social problems cross Ministerial and political boundaries, there has been an increased emphasis on joint ventures. Local examples include: the joint review of seniors' services and needs by Regional Social Services and the District Health Council, and; the S.A.R.S. working group which has developed specific, local responses to provincial and national employment programs. At a provincial level, the Access to Permanent Housing Program, an initiative of the Ministries of Housing and Community and Social Services illustrate this trend. Federally, the increased trend towards de-centralization and "community-partnerships" within the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission is reflective of this trend.

2. **There has been an increased emphasis upon service coordination at the community level.**

   An increased number of community coordination groups (i.e., the Prevention Network, the Council on Domestic Violence, the Council of Information and Referral Services) has resulted in a greater degree of interaction between agencies and an increased effort to coordinate services.

3. **There is a continuing increase in the growth of self-help groups.**

   The growth in the self-help modality is a major development within the service system. This sector, however, remains under-resourced.

4. **The organization and funding of social services will probably undergo a significant transformation within the next few years.**

   Major reviews of the provincial and municipal delivery of social services are underway. Current funding formulae and priorities will probably change.

5. **There will be an increased emphasis, by provincial funders, upon accountability and planning within the voluntary sector.**

   The Ministry of Community and Social Services has recently published a major discussion paper concerning accountability and planning within the voluntary sector. This increase in emphasis has resulted from the increase in governmental financial support to the voluntary sector.

6. **The community service system in Hamilton-Wentworth must develop a bilingual capacity (French Language Services Act).**